

## SWAMP COTTONWOOD

### *Populus heterophylla* L.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Swamp poplar, Cottonwood, Black cottonwood, River cottonwood.

FORM: 80-90 feet high with a trunk diameter 2-3 feet, may reach a height of 100 feet; crown high, rather broad, round topped; bole in large trees straight and columnar.

BARK: Thick, light reddish-brown, rough, broken by long fissures into long narrow plates; on young trunks and large branches, fissures shallower and ridges smoother.

TWIGS: Stout, light yellowish, with a few scattered lenticels and roughened by elevated leaf scars, pith orange-colored.

LEAVES: Alternate, simple, borne on long, hairy terete petioles, broadly ovate, obtuse or subacute at the apex, rounded to cordate at the base, crenate, 4-8 inches long, 3-5 inches wide, thin and firm in texture at maturity, dark green, smooth above, paler and glabrous below.

FLOWERS: Appear before the leaves; dioecious; staminate in densely flowered aments 2-2 1/2 inches long; pistillate in few-flowered aments 1-2 inches long.

FRUIT: A drooping ament, 4-6 inches long, bearing a few dark green capsules containing small seeds covered by a mat of white hairs.

WINTER BUDS: Ovate, acute, puberulous, reddish-brown, covered by 4-7 scales, about 1/4 inch long.

WOOD: Light, soft, weak, close-grained, pale brown, with thin brownish-white sapwood

USES: Pulp, crates. Historical uses: boxes, pails, tubs.

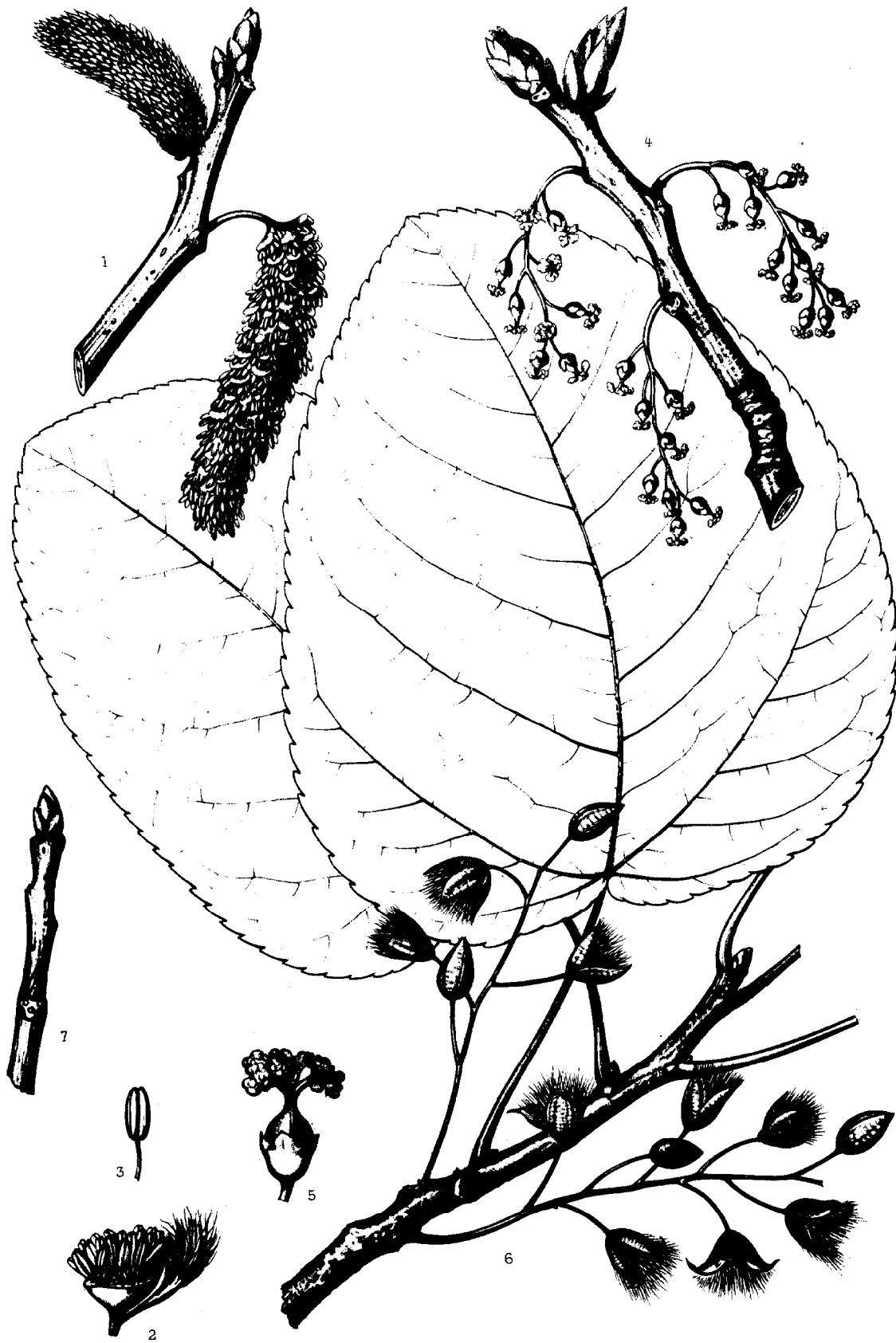
HABITAT: Moisture-loving; low swampy situations, often where the soil inundated long periods of time.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Round leaf stalks, not laterally flattened; large bluntly pointed leaves; pith orange-colored; buds slightly pubescent toward the base.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Reported from Montgomery, Clarke, Dallas Counties and lower part of the Mobile Delta.

#### EXPLANATION OF PLATE

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|---|--|
| 1. A flowering branch of the staminate tree | 4. A flowering branch of the pistillate tree |
| 2. A staminate flower with its scale        | 5. A pistillate flower                       |
| 3. A stamen                                 | 6. A fruiting branch                         |
|   | 7. A winter branch                           |



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